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LETTER DATED 15 APRIL 1993 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF CROATIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

Upon instructions of my Government, I have the honour to reiterate the full support of the Republic of Croatia for the enforcement of Security Council resolution 816 (1993).

In accordance with paragraph 7 of the said resolution, I have the honour to inform you of the actions undertaken by the Government of the Republic of Croatia, upon requests of the Member States participating in the authorized operation.

The Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in Budapest, acting on behalf of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), on 8 April 1993 requested the Republic of Croatia the use of its airspace for aircraft from the respective Air Forces of the United States of America, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the Republic of France and the Kingdom of the Netherlands - in order to enable the implementation of resolution 816 (1993). The request was granted on 9 April 1993; consequently, the Republic of Croatia is supporting the NATO action by providing the use of its airspace.

Pursuant to paragraph 4 of resolution 816 (1993), the Government of the Republic of Croatia, in order to ease and facilitate the complete implementation of the resolution, offers the use of the airfields of Zadar and Dubrovnik and the full logistical support available (fuel, food, accommodation, facilities). In the case of emergency or vis major, when the security of the planes or the personnel would be endangered, all the assistance and the resources will immediately be made available, and all the airfields on the territory of the Republic of Croatia could be used.

In order to prevent any possible mishaps or threat to the security of the international or domestic commercial and passenger air traffic, in the Croatian airspace, it is our wish to more precisely define the above general permission.

The Croatian Government is deeply concerned at this time - due to the presence of large numbers of military aircraft undertaking a combat surveillance and interception operation in the vicinity of the airspace of the Republic of Croatia and overflying it, due to the particular geographical shape of Croatia and due to the position of the civilian air-corridors (ATC routes) - that the safety of commercial passenger air-traffic could be endangered.

Already on several occasions "near mid-air encounters" with passenger aircraft have been reported when the NATO combat aircraft were crossing the ATC airways into Split and Dubrovnik civilian airport, causing concern among the passengers, crew members and ground air-traffic controller personnel. This has led to consideration of temporarily closing the respective airports to all traffic, until a workable technical solution can be found.

In order to facilitate the communication between the NATO authorities acting under the authorization given in resolution 816 (1993), and the relevant civilian and military authorities of the Republic of Croatia, my Government invites the appointment of two military liaison Air Force officers to serve in air control centres in Zagreb and Split, respectively. At the same time, and pending the previous political decision by the participating Member States, it announces its readiness to appoint a liaison Air Force officer to serve in the tactical headquarters of the operation. It is our belief that in the described manner the necessary flow of the essential traffic information, both on the activities of the Croatian civilian and military traffic and of the overflight of NATO combat aircraft over the airspace of the Republic of Croatia - especially of the intercepting and crossing of the ATC airways and NATO combat aircraft flying paths, would be greatly facilitated and eased.

I would ask for your kind assistance in distributing this letter as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Mario NOBILO
Ambassador
Permanent Representative